

Thinking, design.

A construct of (and for) change

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Semantically speaking, design thinking is easily mis-used; resulting in potentially exclusive decisions, and unintentional steps backward. Contemporaneously, design philosophy has evolved; largely due to the need for flexibility in delivery of solutions for a rapidly moving market and clear methodology. A modern interpretation of the evolved discipline suggests a gradual cross-over of research and design (Holliday et al, 2014). This paradigm shift incorporates philosophical thinking and qualitative research standards of replicable methods, sampling, informed ethical conduct and robust evidence to inform the 'art'. We propose that such a design construct is advantageous; not being instinctively nor egocentrically biased.

The traditional design-process can result in complex coded opportunities. Additionally, the balance of power to decode opportunity appears to have changed with a democratisation of design (IKEA, 2016). Democratic design whilst once associated with the analysis of Scandinavian workplaces, has transcended to the maker-marketplace, evident in the crowdsourcing of new products. Selection of designs and solutions is according to small scale investment preferences i.e. the maker produces the options that are most liked and consequently invested in, prior to reaching production variables and logistical expenses. It is showing that user interaction with designed prototypes can result in successful, market ready propositions.

At the development end of a proposition, an increasing compatibility between designer, user and researcher is resulting in, and from, participatory methods that gather deep insights. Participatory Action Research (PAR) methods conceptualised since the 1940's (Lewin et al, 1946 onwards) led to operational methods as a catalyst for change. Rapid evolution of methods, and application in 1960's social change has led to Co-creation, encouraging wider participation with fuzzy-end problems (Sanders and Stappers, 2008) to seek mutually successful solutions. But participation is not the same as autonomy. Co-creation often requires facilitation, with interaction during a typically short time-frame. Consequently, unless responsibility to proceed with outcomes is established at the outset, propositions can remain conceptual (with lack of progression and disillusion for those involved).

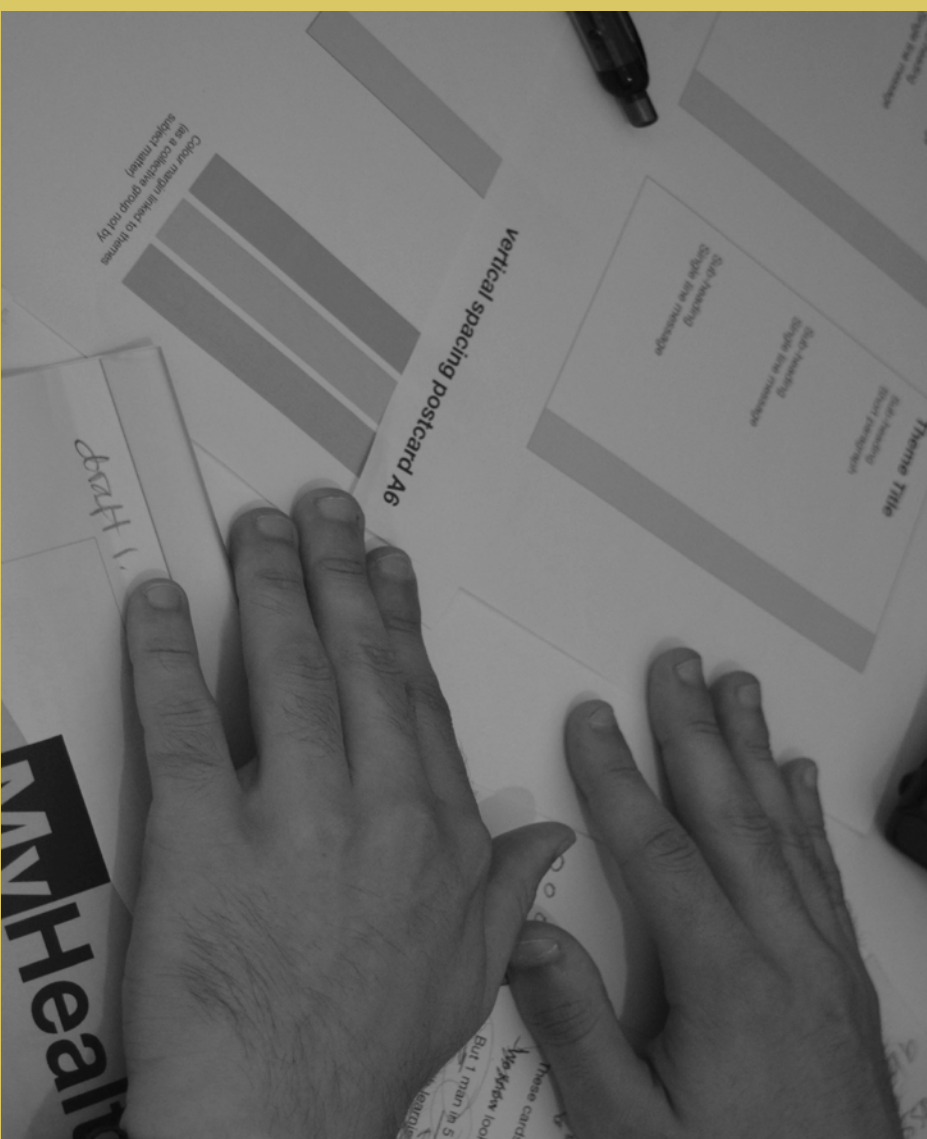
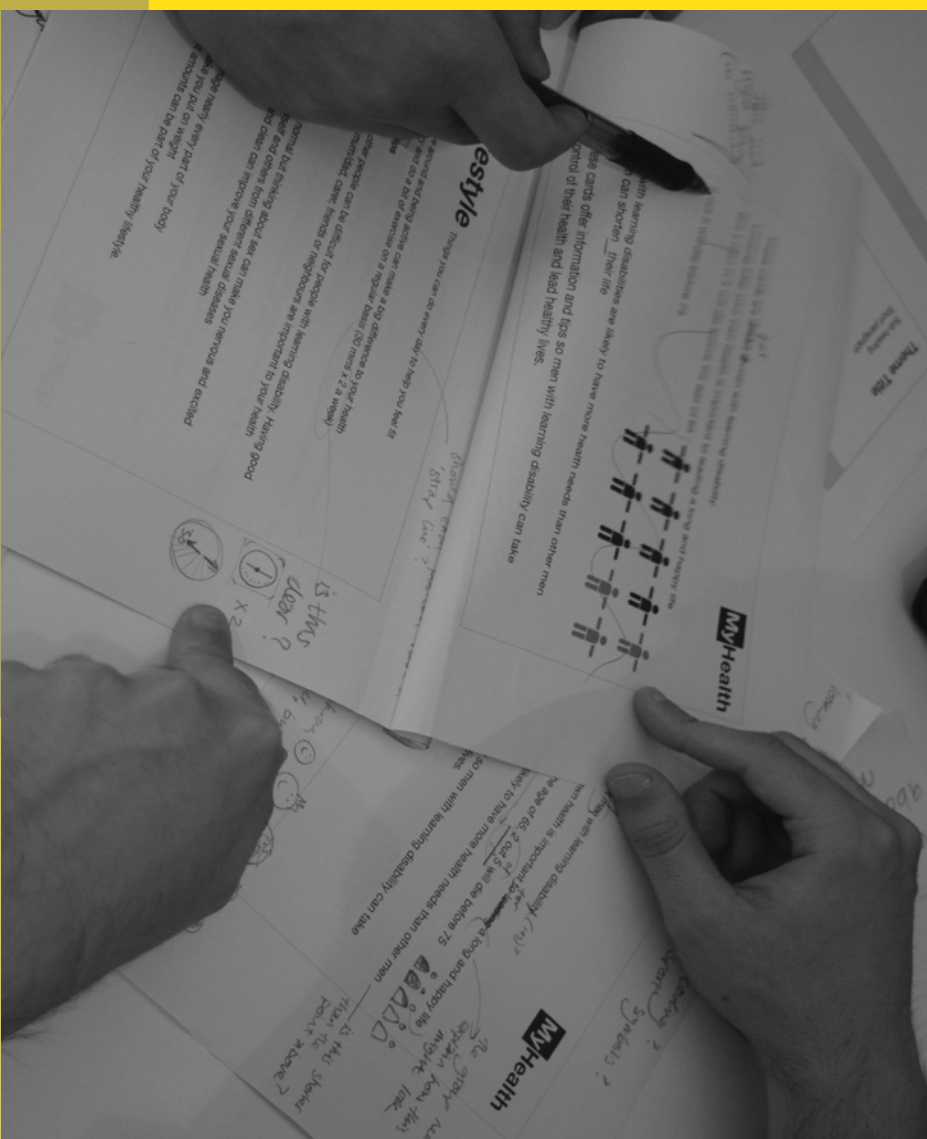
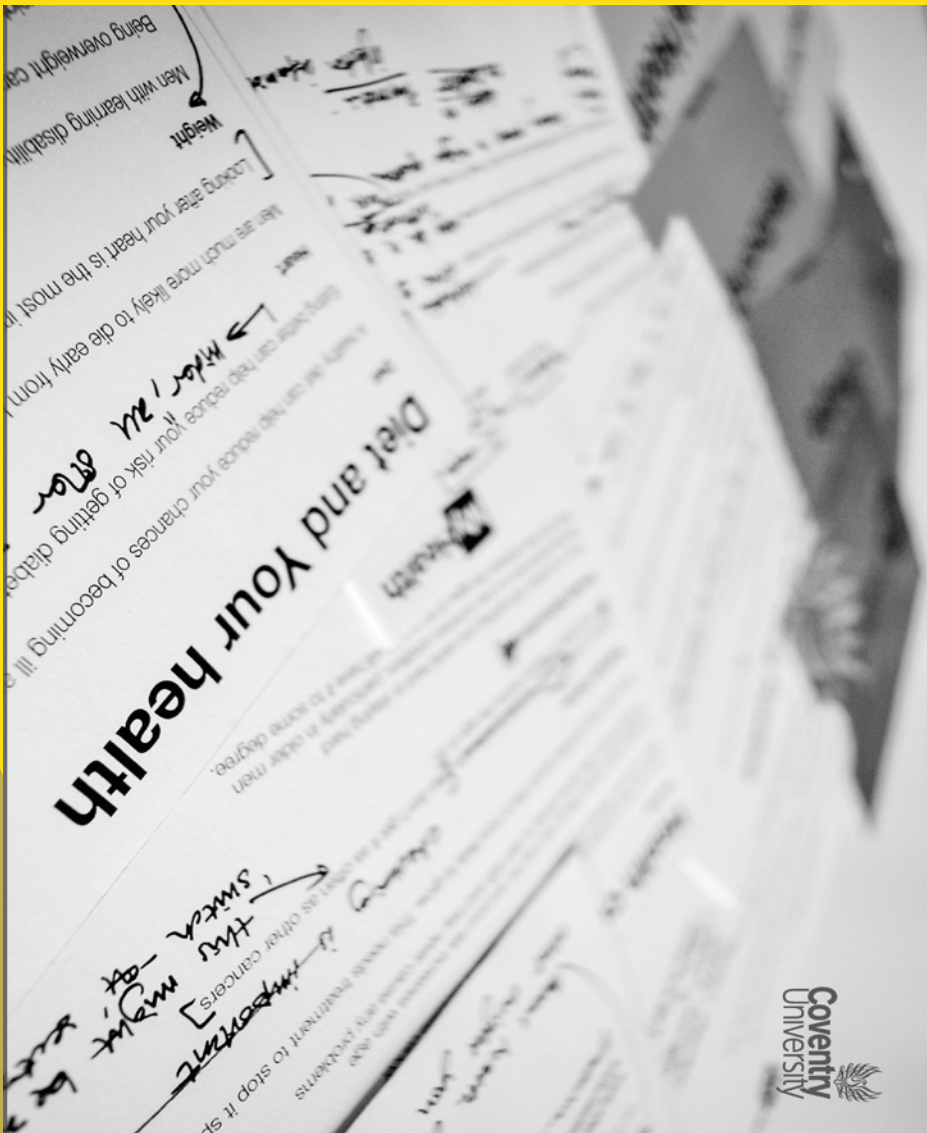


Figure 1. The iterative process for definition of language and design for mens health postcards. Co-created by men, for men. Development team led equally by men with Intellectual Disability, Designers and Researchers.

Researcher

Analysis. Repeatable methods. Ethical approach

Designer

Solution seeking. Creative methods.

Emerging convergent, empathic-space

Co-creator

Experiential knowledge. Problem identifier.

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